

## 2019 URARA PRESENTATIONS

### BARBER

**Title:** Chasing the Plumed Serpents

**Abstract:** Plumed and horned serpents, which are still important religious icons throughout the modern pueblo world, are found in rock art imagery throughout many prehistoric Southwest cultures. A study has been conducted to map out the temporal and regional distribution of rock art images in order to identify the emergence and spread of the crested serpent ideology in the southwest. The study has concentrated on Four Corner rock art sites in Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico, but also following the leads into Northern Chihuahua, and other outlying regions. In some locations the crested serpents appear to have horns, while in others they have both horns and plumes, and in some cases the crest is unclear. The plumed serpent appearance in the southwest has largely been attributed to infusion of the Mesoamerican plumed serpent ideology such as Quetzalcoatl, from the highlands of Mexico. However, this is challenged by the horned serpent imagery, which appears very early in the Southwest, particularly in Utah Basketmaker and Barrier Canyon Style sites, and likely had an early influence on the ancestral Puebloan cultures. The early horned serpent ideology may have fused together with the plumed serpent, to form the combined horned and plumed serpent imagery seen at discrete locations in the southwest.

### BLESSED SACRAMENT ARCHAEOLOGY CLUB

**Title:** Cataloguing Rock Art at the Smith Archaeological Preserve: A Middle Schooler's Perspective

**Abstract:** For half a year now the Blessed Sacrament School's Archaeology Club, "The Shovel Bums," have been mapping in prehistoric and historic rock art at the *Smith Archaeological Conservancy* under the supervision of the Preserve's manager, Randy Griffin, and SHPO compliance archaeologist, Elizabeth Hora. Shovel Bum spokespersons Daniela Medellin (7<sup>th</sup> grade) and Emma Manross (8<sup>th</sup> grade) will discuss some of the most rewarding aspects of the work, which include putting this site on the Archaeological Conservancy's Registry and discovering several previously undocumented petroglyphs, as well as its most challenging—such as fly bites, searing heat, and finding your socks filled with cheatgrass seeds. The presentation offers a young person's candid perspective on the inherent cultural, historic, and spiritual value of the Smith Conservancy's rock art (especially since Daniela is half Tarahumara Indian), and why preservation, appreciation, and further research could elevate this "outdoor museum" to the status of local cultural treasure.

### BURRILLO

**Titles:** The Anthropology of Paleontology: A Quick Look at Native American Depictions of the North American Fossil Record

**Abstract:** The study of how Indigenous peoples articulate with the fossil record can offer researchers a tremendous wealth of insights about those cultures and their relationships with the land, as well as offer opportunities for further scientific and cross-cultural collaboration. Yet this topic remains woefully overlooked by anthropologists. A quick look at the archaeology of Native American depictions and interpretations of the North American fossil record reveals just how intricate, exciting, and sophisticated Indigenous paleontology can be.

## **FARMER**

**Title:** The Peculiar Post-BCS Deterioration of a BCS Panel at Kachina Bridge, Natural Bridges National Monument

**Abstract:** Ancient, historic and modern alterations to rock art imagery are frequent, well-documented, and have long been recognized. The forms and varieties of alterations are numerous, such as (though not limited to) human interference such as graffiti, over-working, and bullet holes, natural erosion or defacement in numerous forms, wild animal interference, and destruction or removal of entire images. While specific motivations for such alterations typically lack historical context, and therefore defy clear explanation, the means or technique of the alteration are typically more apparent (abrading, over-painting, weathering, etc.), and these often present clues to the apparent reasons for the alteration. A survey of documented Barrier Canyon Style (BCS) images in fact reveals that some 70% of all BCS images display some form of “post-original alteration”, or POA. This frequency of POA occurrences, especially in ancient contexts, in turn suggests that ancient artists embraced such POA events as an integral part of the image-making process and incorporated such changes within the symbolic function of the image. This reflects a very different philosophy towards issues of aesthetics, ideal form, and the eternal nature of art forms from the traditional canonical-based philosophy of Western culture, which espoused the belief in and pursuit of the “perfect”, “most beautiful”, and “most enduring”. However, one particular BCS panel near Kachina Bridge in Natural Bridges National Monument displays significant POA of a type not documented elsewhere, and which cannot be easily classified as to specific technique. Close analysis of the alterations does reveal certain patterns and characteristics from which hypothetical techniques, and therefore ideas regarding the purpose of the alteration, might be considered.

## **JENKINSON**

**Title:** Rock Art of Dinetah: Myths and Cures of Navajo ceremonialism

**Abstract:** The Dinetah area of northwest New Mexico is considered to be the place where many of today's Navajo ceremonies were created and first performed. This presentation will look at rock art sites where ceremonies were likely performed and examine the myths and cures associated with each ceremony.

## **LUNDWALL**

**Title:** *The Sheep Shelter: An Observatory into the Past*

**Abstract:** With over two years of observation time at the Sheep Shelter cave located in Fremont Indian State Park, I have discovered three key features at the cave site: 1) the site is a winter solstice observation point and for two weeks of the year before and after winter solstice sunrise may be observed from within the cave; 2) unique sun-shadow phenomena occur in the cave during this period and seem to be incorporated with the petroglyphs carved therein; and 3) the cave site itself holds a remarkable alignment for stellar observation, as the cave ceiling forms an observation window of the opposing southern bluff and reveals only about twenty degrees of sky when observing from within the cave. This “sliver” of sky-view just happens to be the line of ecliptic. Key stars and the planets can thus be observed and tracked from their rising positions and across the sky and cave ceiling. During the winter months, however, the ecliptic drifts north of the observation window and the dominant objects seen from within the cave during this time are the stars of Orion and Sirius.

## **MALOTKI**

**Title:** The Case for *Bison Antiquus* at the Upper Sand Island Paleocomplex near Bluff, Utah.

**Abstract:** Among the numerous panels that make up the impressive rock art theater along the San Juan River corridor between the town of Bluff and Butler Wash is a Paleoindian complex at Upper Sand Island that features two Columbian mammoth engravings, M1 and M2. M1 is overlain by a bison glyph that I propose is an Ancient bison (*Bison antiquus*). One investigator, however, critical of the identification of the proboscidean images, considers the bison depiction the work of historic Ute Indians, thereby suggesting that it represents an American bison (*Bison bison*), popularly known as buffalo.

Based on such factors as iconographic context, general morphology, grooving depth, degree of repatination and weathering, the case for historic Ute origin is easily rejected when comparing the Upper Sand Island bison with dozens of other bison images, both painted and engraved, from the Four Corners States of Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona.

To round out my presentation, I will offer, as an exercise of the imagination, a list of speculative interpretations of the bison portrayal.

## **MCHUGH**

**Title:** Using Ethnography to Shed Light on Celestial Motifs in Prehistoric Utah Rock Art

**Abstract:** Modern interpretation of prehistoric rock art attempts to ascertain some inkling into the archaic thoughts of the artist—a murky realm of inquiry that archaeological theorist Lewis Binford dismissed as reckless “palaeopsychology.” However, over the past two decades more careful methodologies have evolved, making it possible to expose the manner in which cognitive processes operated in specific prehistoric contexts. This presentation examines some solar, lunar, and stellar motifs throughout central and northern Utah that are affiliated with the Fremont or prehistoric Numic-speaking peoples. The photographs and accompanying azimuth readings for each panel suggest the indigenous artists held a deep concern for directionality, and, more specifically, what appears to be a conscious attempt to align rock art with the solstices, equinoxes, or North Star. The author then cites late nineteenth and early twentieth century ethnography which sheds light on the purpose and function of the heavenly images in the rock art, and in some instances even the esoteric belief that inspired the celestial icon. By utilizing this indigenous wisdom as a cipher, the author makes a general interpretation regarding the potential meaning of each celestial panel; thus demonstrating a disciplined manner by which ‘palaeopsychology’ can be practiced.

## **MERRELL**

**Title:** Pursuing an ARPA Violation.... Do you have what it takes! (C&P)

**Abstract:** The recent outcome of an ARPA case involving damage to an isolated archaeological site containing pictographs in the Lemhi Range of southern Idaho is a story worth telling for the lessons it teaches those of us who attempt to protect and preserve our cultural resources.

In April 2019, a male from Challis, Idaho, pleaded guilty to the unauthorized excavation of an Archaeological site south of Challis Idaho. The U.S. District Judge instructed the person to pay \$2,000 in restitution and at his sentencing hearing, the guilty individual reticently apologized to the Shoshone Bannock Tribes for the damaged site. What is not seen in the final press releases

is the background efforts and dedication it takes to bring such a case through the judicial process to a judgement. This presentation will follow the activities taken in response to the initial discovery of graffiti at the pictograph site, steps taken to identify the perpetrators of the damage, the courage of agency employees living in an unsupportive community, and the follow through for the protection and preservation of one small but significant cultural site.

## **PATTERSON**

**Title:** Journey into a Mythic Landscape, Paiyatemu and the Corn Maidens

**Abstract:** Duck-headed anthropomorphic figures represent the Katsinas (rain bringers) who live in *Koluwala'wa*, Katsina Village, below the water. When they travel, they take the form of a duck that can go into the water underworld, and arise out and fly through the sky. One sequence in the Zuni Creation story features Paiyatemu; First youth or Sun Youth, the son of the Sun, God of Music and Flowers and God of early Dawn Moisture and Dew, deemed necessary to the growth of corn. His flute music attracts butterflies and flowers. The songs are prayers for the return of warmth and vegetation. He lives in a crevasse hidden by mist where the Flute Youths play music and entertain the Maids of Dew and Corn.

During the Dance of the Corn Maidens, it is the Flute Youths who became impassioned by their beauty and attempted “to make free with their persons”. This so insulted the Maidens that they fled and went into hiding. Their absence for many years results in corn crop failures and starvation for the Zuni people. Eventually the people ask the War Twins to call upon the magnificent Paiyatemu to find and bring back the sacred Corn Maidens

The northwestern San Juan River basin is the mythic landscape stage for this theatrical event. It is portrayed on cliff faces and canyon walls beginning with the mist-covered crevasse where Paiyatemu entertains the Maids of Dew and Corn to the music of his flute. It ends with the hiding place “in a canyon far to the south” with a painting of Paiyatuma playing his flute to the Maids of Dew and Maids of Corn, and returns with them to the village.

## **SUCEC**

**Title:** Traveling Through Time; The *Shamans Panel* in 9 Mile Canyon

**Abstract:** At the large cluster of public rock art panels, where Daddy Canyon enters 9 Mile Canyon, is a composition of four pecked significant figures in varying degrees of repatination.

This panel is known to locals as the *Shamans Panel* because of the skirted Fremont figure with an outsized fringed horned head dress and hands in the form of bird's feet of three digits. The figure in the upper left of the panel appears to be the oldest and most repatinated and in the Barrier Canyon style. The Fremont figure, in the lower right, appears to be the youngest and least repatinated. The two figures in between have intermediate stages of repatination and are composed of a mix of the two figures' style motifs.

Throughout the northern Colorado Plateau, particularly in the Escalante area, the Dirty Devil area, and here in 9 Mile Canyon, significant figures are commonly seen in a mix of the Barrier Canyon and Fremont styles and appear to support the belief of archaeologist Phil Geib, stated in *Glen Canyon Revisited*, that "...the term historically “related” in the sense of implying

ancestry should...apply to the Barrier Canyon and Fremont styles..." There is a suggestion for a date of one of the figures – whose body resembles the Range Creek clay *Pilling Figurines*, which are thought to be Fremont in style. However, the figurines also appear to be more closely related to the puzzling *Faces Motif* painted figures in the Needles District of Canyonlands National Park.

The wall surface has deteriorated in places and, except for the Fremont figure, the repatinated images are difficult to make out. This presentation will parse the forms of the figures through enhancements of *dstretch* and over-drawing and will discuss dating and the attribution of style.

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#### **SATURDAY FEATURED SPEAKER:**

**Bernard M. Jones, Jr. and Christopher E. Drover**

**Title:** Flower World Iconography, and Metaphor in the Rock Art of the Southern Colorado Plateau

**Abstract:** A metaphoric “Flower World” was shared among early, Uto-Aztecan agriculturists of Mexico. Adopted by many Pueblo peoples of the Southwest, this concept is multidimensional. Oral tradition narrates a concurrent mythic time of perpetual summer, abundant rain, brilliant flowers and plentiful corn. This complex system of spirituality, centered on the metaphor of flowers, also has a practical element. For Pueblo peoples the reality of a harsh desert environment, necessitates complex systems of ritual, ceremony, and prayer to usher in concrete springtime events. The hopeful metaphoric result being “a land brightened with flowers”, itself a metaphor for a season of abundant crops. Visual application of these concepts has provided an interpretation of thirteenth, and fourteenth century Puebloan rock art. We explore the breadth of rock art icons associated with the meaning, function, and ritual use of Flower World imagery on the southern Colorado Plateau.

#### **SUNDAY FEATURED SPEAKER:**

**Lynda D. McNeil and David L. Shaul**

**Title:** *Itamu umumi yooya' ökiwni* ('We will arrive as rain to you'): Evidence of historical relationships among Western Basketmaker, Fremont, and Hopi Peoples

**Abstract:** Ortman and McNeil (2017) made the case that Eastern Basketmaker II (EBM) Kiowa-speakers inhabited the northwestern edge of the Proto-Tanoan speech community homeland in the Upper San Juan area. During Basketmaker II, EBM farmers who migrated north shared threads of common heritage with Fremont peoples and may have affiliations with certain Fremont sites. Were the Kiowas alone or joined by others on their migration north? In this paper, we argue that EBM Kiowa farmers affiliated with WBM Hopi foragers in the Central Mesa Verde area before migrating to the Uintah Basin. We support this claim with linguistic, archaeological, and rock art evidence suggesting that during BM II: 1) Central Mesa Verde served as a “interaction zone” between Hopi foragers (or forager-farmers) and Kiowa farmers; 2) affiliated Hopi and Kiowa groups migrated through west-central Colorado and the Tavaputs Plateau to the Uintah Basin; 3) both groups shared threads of common heritage with Fremont

people and are connected to certain Fremont sites; and 4) while both peoples abandoned farming in the Uintah Basin by around 1050 CE, with the affiliated Hopis retracing the route taken by their BM II ancestors. Their archaeological footprint may provide clues to understanding the Gateway Tradition in west-central Colorado.